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## CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

## OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

13 June 1951

MEMORANDUM OF INFORMATION NO. 78

FOR: National Estimates Board

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SUBJECT: Reasons for Difficulties in Coordinating US Strategy  
with the UK and France

The difficulties of coordinating US policies with those of the UK and France have clearly increased during the past twelve months, primarily because of increased US pressure for concerted action against the USSR and its Satellites (including Communist China). Recently the UK and France have interposed delay or objections to such US proposals as extending the scope of NAT commitments by permitting the adherence of Greece and Turkey; bringing Spain into NATO; expanding the rearmament effort beyond the presently planned levels; broadening the export restrictions applied to the Soviet bloc beyond their present scope; "hot pursuit" north of the Yalu; diplomatic sanctions against the Chinese Communist regime; accepting the Chinese Nationalist Government as signatory to the Japanese Peace Treaty; and expediting the rearmament of Germany. In view of the basic psychological and military unpreparedness of the countries of Western Europe for war, it is probably reasonable to expect that these difficulties will continue, particularly during periods of heightened East-West tension.

French and British hesitations, procrastinations, or outright refusals do not flow from any difference in fundamental objectives (the containment of Soviet Communism and the development of military strength) but from a variety of other motives:

- a. the great fear of war with the USSR;
- b. the fear of economic relapse and consequent social troubles;
- c. anxiety over the direction and continuity of US foreign policy;
- d. caution in the face of opposition as well as diversities and uncertainties in public and Parliamentary opinion -- domestic politics;
- e. hesitation to risk adverse reactions in fourth countries having special relationships with France or Britain; and

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AUTH: HR 70-2

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- f. the conviction that some proposed measures would be ineffective and pin-pricking and that some would be harmful.



After the rearmament programs improve their military strength, it may be that the French and British Governments will be ready to take a harder line toward the Soviet bloc, involving greater risks. Even then the continuing vulnerability of the two countries to weapons of mass destruction will make them reluctant to adopt certain US policies which in the US view are important or even vital components of Western strategy, but which they will regard as unnecessarily provocative.

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